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## Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

God only wise, great is Your faithfulness.

Inspire our lawmakers to focus on Your priorities, striving to do Your will on Earth even as it is done in Heaven. During moments of confusion, help them to whisper a prayer for Your wisdom. Remind them that You desire that they set their affection on the things above that will live beyond time into eternity. May they not forget that You expect them to be accountable to You and to be stewards of their talents and abilities. Lord, fill them with Your Spirit so that they will mount up with wings like eagles, running without weariness and walking without fainting.

We pray in Your strong Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The majority leader is recognized.

### WORKING TOGETHER IN THE SENATE

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, last week the Senate took decisive action to address America's devastating prescription opioid and heroin epi-

demic by passing the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. It is an important accomplishment for the American people. It is the latest example of a Republican Senate leading on important issues. It also reminds us what can be accomplished when Senators focus on issues where they can agree rather than only fighting about issues where they don't agree.

It is clear that Democrats and Republicans do not agree on whether the American people should have a voice in the current Supreme Court vacancy. Republicans know the American people elected a Republican Senate to be a check-and-balance to President Obama. We know the next Justice could dramatically change the direction of the Court for decades. We think the American people deserve a voice in that conversation. Democrats would rather the President make this incredibly consequential decision on his way out the door. This is one issue where we simply don't agree, so let's keep our focus on the areas where we can find agreement instead.

I ask colleagues to join us in continuing to do our work here in the Senate. As we do that, the American people can continue making their voices heard in this important national conversation. Passing CARA was a great example of what we can get done when we work constructively toward solutions.

This week we will have the opportunity to make progress on other issues, including one I would like to mention now.

Vermont recently passed food-labeling legislation that according to one study could increase annual food costs by more than \$1,000 per family. These aren't just Vermont families I am talking about; these are families all across our country.

The Senate will soon consider commonsense, bipartisan legislation that aims to ensure that decisions in one State or a patchwork of different State

laws do not hurt American families throughout our country—especially at a time when so many are already struggling to make ends meet. The goal is to set clear, science-based standards in order to prevent families from being unfairly hurt by a patchwork of conflicting local and State labeling laws passed in States and cities where they don't even live.

I would like to recognize the chairman of the Agriculture Committee, Senator ROBERTS, for his continuing work on this issue. The Agriculture Committee moved to pass the chairman's mark last week with bipartisan support. I know Chairman ROBERT continues to work with Senator STABENOW, the ranking member, and others across the aisle on a pathway forward on legislation we can pass in the Senate to resolve this issue. I urge Members to continue working with him in that endeavor.

Let's not forget that this may well be our last chance to prevent the actions of one State—just one State—from hurting Americans in all the other States. Legislation to address this issue passed the House last summer with bipartisan support. With cooperation from across the aisle, we can take action on a bipartisan basis here on the Senate floor as well.

### COAL FAMILIES

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, on one final matter, when President Obama was a candidate, he boasted that his energy tax policies would make electricity prices skyrocket for American families. When President Obama took office, his administration declared a war on coal families and on their jobs. For a time, his administration tried to deny it was declaring war on anyone, but now we hear boasting from the highest ranks of the Democratic Party that these policies are going to put coal miners out of business.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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